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DECORATIONS OF HALLWAYS.

HESTER M. POOLE.

NOTHING can be more stiff and unattractive than the old-fashioned long, narrow hallway, which is a mere passage and needs to be relieved by a few artistic effects. Modern archtecture serves to break up the long straight lines, especially in country villas where there is a chance to throw the staircase into a niche built for that purpose at one side, or to carry it up by easy stages from the rear of the small reception-room into which the hall is thus converted.

Luxurious dwellings, costing many tens if not hundreds of thousands of dollars, are, of course, entered through stately apartments which give dignity and value to the whole structure. It is not of such that we principally treat to-day, but of those modest houses already built in which the majority of well to-do citizens find their homes.

Much ornamentation in such a hall is impossible. The best thing to do where expense is not objected to, is to drop a couple of light Moorish arch-heads from the ceiling directly over and in a line with the foot of the staircase. They meet over the newel-post and must be constructed of the same wood as that used in the finish of the hall.

Then drop a Mikado bead portiere from the hall arch-head, which may be very simply carved—the shape imports more than the finish—permanently fastening it against the wall at the height of the newel-post. In front of the fastening and contiguous to it place a small slender circular table, gilded if the hall be not well-lighted, sustaining the inevitable and useful card receiver.

A thicker hanging may be used but the effect is then less happy, since the narrow portion of the hall serves as a half seen and dimly-lighted vista, giving that appearance of space which is rather increased by the intervention of the portiere.

The treatment of walls and ceiling is entirely a matter of light and location. A house situated on the north side of a city street, and with that handsomest vestible door of all—one of plain plate glass, beveled and uncolored—with allow a good deal of deep, dark color in the hall. A strawberry red, or a transparent carmine glaze over deep yellow, any color which is glorified by sunshine, may be here admissible. The dado may be rich dark reddish brown or bronze, either stippled or stenciled in geometrical figures or painted lincrusta walton. The ceiling may be cream or a warm gray, with a line of bronze outlined with the wall color some six inches from the wall and an inch in width. The moulding are also bronze with narrow lines of crimson.

This coloring while very effective is florid for a quiet taste. Suppose we use chocolate for such, with a canary yellow for the ceiling and dado. The chocolate is light or gray enough to allow stencilings of citrine color in the dado. They must be small in size and archaic, arabic or geometrical in figure, never in the remotest degree copying natural forms. The dado should not be more than eight or ten inches wide, and the figures should be edged or outlined with black. The citrine ought to reappear in the mouldings, and a line of dull orange-brown, six inches from the wall, finishes the ceiling.

DESIGN FOR CHINA DECORATION.

THE HELLEBORUS NIGER, CHRISTMAS ROSE.

These old-fashioned stencilings with the painted wall upon which they are super-imposed are always more or less in vogue. This method of decoration, though costing a third more than a good quality of paper, is both durable and quaint, and will never entirely go out of style. Hand-finished work has a certain quality to recommend it which cultivated people are not slow to recognize. Besides, it can easily be keep free from dust, and shows no joinings like wall-paper.

Upon a wall of light reddish brown, in a dark hallway—one having a northern front, may be stenciled figures in three sizes, ranging from two to five inches in diameter. These may be of the color of *café au lait*. In the frieze reverse the order, using the reddish brown large figure of the stenciling alone upon the ground of the lighter tint. The ceiling ought to be lighter than the cone, scarcely more than a pale salmon, a color which gives a pleasant glow to the darkest corner.

Where paper is preferred to paint it is desirable to use large figured yet unobtrusive designs, such as a canary yellow ground with conventionalized flowers of a slightly deeper tint, or deep crimson upon light, that is, shade upon shade. Two distinct colors in one small room serve to make it smaller still unless they are finely broken and mixed in the Persian style. Even then this kind of paper suits rather a bed-room than an entrance-way. Sand-finished walls are, indeed, very suitable for a hall as well as dining-room. In this case the stenciled frieze should be used, not paper. The cove-color should harmonize with that of the stenciling.

The richest finish of all are hangings of painted tapestry, but these are beyond the reach of moderate purses. In this manner the hallway of Geo. W. Childs, of Philadelphia, has lately been decorated.

It is a lofty room, some twelve feet wide. The door casings, base-board and mouldings are made out of native and foreign marbles, ranging in tint from black to yellow. From top to bottom the walls are covered with what appears to be Gobelin tapestry, at least to a cursory observer.

Instead of that it is skillfully executed painting on tapestry canvas, the subject a beautiful landscape which climbs the staircase, hillwise. Beyond the foreground of bosky dells and groups of forest trees are vistas of beauty. The whole makes an exceedingly rich, variegated and striking piece of decoration.

In the front of the newel-post of the grand staircase, in this same hall of Mr. Child's, is set the dial-plate of a handsome clock, also of marble like the post and railing. This staircase rises from a side hall at right angles to the main entrance. In it are some noble specimens of cloisonné enamel, which were brought from Japan by General Grant and by him presented to Mr. Childs. One of them, a huge vase, is the largest and finest to be found in this country.

A broad hallway gives opportunity for such large pieces of ceramic art as would be out of place in a drawing-room.

To the top of a newel-post might easily be attached a quaint, large mouthed, low vase, suitable for holding ferns, a small palm or any other decorative plant. It might be changed from time to time, and would always serve to break the straight, stiff lines of the staircase. And if there is a landing let a piece of rich Japanese embroidery or a Turkish rug be thrown over the balustrade, or hang a bit of rich color on the wall behind.